

Characteristics of the Wise Man, 1-9 Rough Draft of Outline

Post by "Don" of May 29, 2020 at 4:23 PM

[Quote from Cassius](#)

Another way of stating my concern is to observe that I think it is pretty clear that the goal and the guide in Epicurean terms is "pleasure." That means that the goal of life cannot be "to be a sage" and the guide of life cannot be "a sage" or "to follow a sage," and those terms strike me as particularly hazardous if we consider "sage" to be synonymous with "a wise man" and if we consider how important it is not to embrace "wisdom" as the goal or the guide of life.

Is it possible that all this discussion of "sage" is overlay by Diogenes Laertius using his non-Epicurean philosophical categories?

Epicurus himself uses the term σοφός as "sage" or "wise man" in the Letter to Menoikos:

Quote

[126] The wise man does not deprecate life nor does he fear the cessation of life.

[126] ὁ δὲ σοφὸς οὔτε παραιτεῖται τὸ ζῆν > οὔτε φοβεῖται τὸ μὴ ζῆν:

So if we are to accept the Letter as being from Epicurus's own hand, he referred to "the wise man"

I wouldn't say the goal of life is to be sage but that becoming wise is a natural result of following the Epicurean path. Wisdom/prudence makes the pleasant life possible along with being just and acting rightly (PD 5). One becomes wise in applying the philosophy and these characteristicsuh, characterize (sorry) what behaviors one will exhibit by being adept at knowing how to apply the philosophy of pleasure in one's life. For those not fully proficient in the application of Epicurean philosophy, these characteristics can be a list of "fake it til you make it" behaviors. The more you practice the behaviors of a "sage" the more you'll see their usefulness if know how to make your choices.